

Lancaster University

GEORGE FOX LECTURE
THEATRE REFRESH

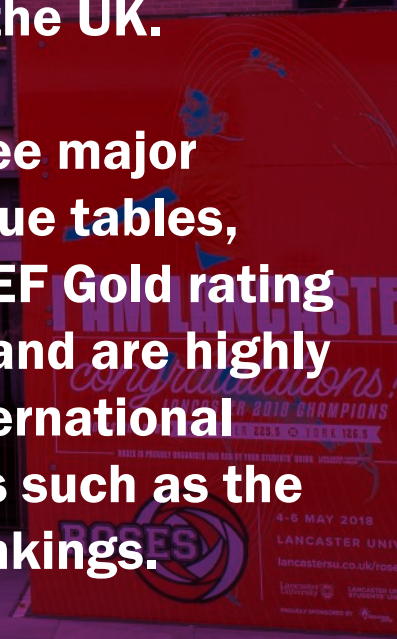
Flagship lecture theatre refresh

pure av
integrated audio visual solutions



Lancaster University is considered to be one of the best higher education institutes in the UK.

Top 10 in three major national league tables, they hold a TEF Gold rating for teaching and are highly ranked in international league tables such as the QS World Rankings.



High performing and future proof

George Fox Lecture Theatre 1 is the flagship lecture theatre on the thriving Lancaster campus.

Used for teaching and conferences; it has a tiered seating structure and capacity for 344 students. The need to replace existing audiovisual equipment allowed the university to re-think the traditional setup previously in place and to trial the use of AV over IP.

The solution designed and installed by Pure AV had to balance the exploration of new technology with the ongoing delivery of a consistent and reliable experience for room users.

The university required the end user to be able to enter the room and encounter a familiar interface that was easy to use and fully able to support their teaching needs.

The system also needed to function without the need for an AV technician to be present and utilise AMX control to integrate with the University's existing AMX RMS monitoring system.

Lancaster University awarded the contract for the lecture theatre update to Pure AV following a mini competition run under the NWUPC framework contract.



A clear view

One of the first improvements apparent to room users following the refresh of the lecture theatre is the enhanced image quality offered by the new projection system.

Three Panasonic, 9,000 lumens laser projectors are used to create the main teaching display. Projecting directly onto the wall, the units can be used for a single central display or side-by-side when a dual source layout is required.

Two 55" screens mounted on the side walls act as confidence monitors for the presenter and enable them to move freely around the teaching area.

At the lectern, the presenter has access to the familiar AMX control used across the university. A second AMX control panel in the control room is available for use during technician supported events.

The lecturer also has access to a ceiling mounted document camera and dry-erase writing surface on the lectern top to aid with annotation and explanation.

The selected Wolfvision solution providing a large field of view and ample annotation space.





BYOD Connectivity

The inclusion of a Solstice solution delivers a simple method to connect iPads, iPhones, Android and laptop devices.



A new approach to signal distribution

The most significant departure from the standard specification of teaching spaces at the University is the switch to the use of AV over IP; a change driven by the University's desire to trial AV over IP technology and future-proof the installation.

The solution implemented by Pure AV, uses the network as a central matrix and employs AV over IP as the transmission medium within the lecture theatre. External transmission is also possible; however, as the system is designed to sit on a stand-alone network switch, it requires intervention by one of the University's in-house technicians.





Flexible and scalable

The use of AV over IP gives the University the flexibility they need to manage the multiple inputs and outputs from tracking cameras, visualisers, projectors and the various patchable audio and video inputs/outputs in the control room.

The ability to manage and add specific input sources from within the control room adds further flexibility when hosting larger events managed by an AV technician.

The capacity to send out content to other rooms and capture devices further enriching the potential of the system.



Programming for a familiar interface

While the solution replaces the traditional video matrix design with video switching via a Crestron AV over IP solution; control is managed through an AMX control system.

Lancaster University uses AMX for control throughout the campus estate and wanted to maintain this within the George Fox lecture theatre.

The main challenge this presented was in the ability of the AMX control system to operate the Crestron AV over IP solution and crucially get feedback.

This kind of direct control is not possible, so the Pure AV programmer

developed a solution that utilised the Crestron processors to effectively “translate” the commands sent to the Crestron DM NVX to be able to communicate with and control them over IP.

The successful integration of the two systems enabled Pure AV to deliver to the University the preferred elements from both suppliers.

The solution able to meet the brief to maintain consistency for the room user while offering the University the opportunity to explore the added benefits provided by the introduction of AV over IP.





An improved user experience

The user experience is further enhanced through the high-quality voice reinforcement offered by the addition of Sennheiser Speechline digital wireless microphones, and the system integrates fully with the University's lecture capture system enabling any source to be recorded for post-lecture review.



A quick uptake and a quiet helpline

The familiar interface has enabled lecturers to quickly adopt the new system and make use of the additional features without fuss.

The simplicity of the Solstice wireless solution has made it a popular addition to the space and the longer battery life of the Sennheiser Speechline microphones has made the management of microphones more straightforward.

“The requirements were well met; the control system works the same as the rest of the campus, so our users can walk into the space and are immediately comfortable even though there are several additional features not included elsewhere on campus.

We have had very few call outs for support, which given that this is our largest space with one of the highest utilisation rates is a good indicator that the refresh has been a success.”

David Neal,

Teaching space technology coordinator
Lancaster University

As far as the introduction of Crestron NVX is concerned, David Neal is pleased with the results,

“Seeing the Crestron NVX in a live environment demonstrates the flexibility of the system.

Thanks to the skills of the programmers at Pure AV, we can operate a hybrid Crestron/AMX system which allows us to maintain consistency with our existing control infrastructure and benefit from the rich capabilities of Crestron NVX.

We will certainly look to the use of AV over IP in future installations.”





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